

This is a valid measure of the objective. However, to maintain that the learning environment is only a reflection of violence and disciplinary incidents is questionable. It would be appropriate for the State Board to change the objective to address only violence and disciplinary incidents or add more measures to adequately address such environmental features as inviting, inclusive and flexible.

Most objectives listed under the Board's five goals are aspirational statements. They charge DPI with accomplishing the objective with "every student" or "every teacher." There is nothing wrong with adopting aspirations as policy. However, for purposes of accountability, DPI needs to be charged with accomplishing results that are measurable in time and that answer questions such as: "How much improvement in statewide SAT, ACT and NAEP scores will the Board expect DPI to accomplish annually?" Annual (or more often in some cases) reasonable and measurable targets need to be set by the State Board of Education.

COMMENDATION

The adoption of goals for the 21st Century and related objectives represents an important step in deciding for what accomplishments the Board will hold the DPI accountable. DPI is called upon to address five goals that the State Board of Education considers important.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation 3-14:

Review "Future-Ready Students for the 21st Century" and revise the objectives to ensure clarity of meaning. Determine the measures or indicators of accomplishment for which DPI will be held accountable, and set annual or more frequent targets that indicate the extent and nature of change expected by the agency.

"Future-ready Students for the 21st Century" was adopted two years ago. Many of the objectives under the five goals are not clear. For the Department of Public Instruction to be accountable to the State Board, the criteria for holding DPI accountable must be very clear and not subject to different interpretations. Clarifying the objectives and determining what information will be used for accountability is necessary.

The Board's charge to the Department of Public Instruction in "Future-Ready Students for the 21st Century" contains suitable vision statements or general goals. The charge has objectives that are statements of aspiration which are also suitable. Vision and aspiration, however, are not sufficient for holding DPI accountable for results. For some objectives, it is apparent what kind of data would be needed to determine progress or improvement. Some objectives, however, are rather vague and what information would be used by the State Board to exercise suitable accountability monitoring of the department's work is not apparent.

Such data need to be specified for each indicator or measure, and annual or more frequent targets set for how much improvement is expected. The goals must be clarified, indicators or measures of results must be identified, and targets for accomplishment must be set.

